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THE CHRISTIAN YEAR IN
WAR TIME

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THE CHRISTIAN YEAR IN WAR TIME

BY

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THE CHRISTIAN YEAR IN WAR TIME

ADVENT 1917

SONGS BEFORE MORNING

THERE are songs before morning in the prelude to the Gospel. They were chanted first when darkness lay heavy upon Israel. How many a night since then has found the faithful singing the same praises ! Whenever the Church in darkness seeks for new confidence, it has but to return to the beginnings of its life, and catch the joy and peace of those songs, the "Magnificat," the "Benedictus," and the "Nunc Dimittis."

Once more, as Advent comes, the Church can "magnify the Lord and rejoice in God the Saviour." In the "Magnificat" it beholds with wonder "God's purposes in the shaping of human history." From the peace

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of her perfect submission to the mystery of the Divine Will the handmaiden of the Lord passes to see the sweep of the Divine Hand; always He "puts down the mighty from their seats and exalts them of low degree." The present moment, with its surprise, is linked to the long past and to the future, which cannot give the lie to the past. The pledge of the future is in the romance of the past. He who has hitherto controlled human history for a purpose, partly hidden, partly disclosed, will not fail nor change.

This is still for the Church its confidence and comfort. Such is the way as it has always been, such is the way unto all generations. There are undertones in the song; strange ironies in the human story; silences; reverses; delays; and after them swift movements of a Hand constraining mankind. The romance of history comes back with the words—

"The hungry He hath filled with good things,
But the rich He hath sent empty away."

This is the plot of the unfinished story.

History demands much from the character of its students. In such an hour as this it has little comfort for men who are concerned only to seek preference for their own lives—little for those who are impatient of slow movements; none for the faint-hearted who persist in evading the terror in things. But history has much of peace and hope for all servants of God who think more of their nation than of their own lives, more of humanity than of their nation, and more of the glory of God than of all other things.

They are saved from the danger of isolating the present moment. The moment cannot be studied in section. No faithful soul can demand the right to trace all the meaning of his own small portion in time; it is unfinished, and he must be patient. But he has history, and the faith which interprets history; he can see certain manifest achievements of the Lord of holiness and love; but if these had been arrested at one point they would have been unconvincing. So the reader must be prepared to treat the present limited range as a scene in which the same Lord is at

work for the same ends, though at this stage those ends may appear remote or even impossible. "All the great triumphs of history are spiritual," writes a modern historian, "and all are improbable, and even impossible, from the standpoint of common-sense." Therefore faith is ready for surprises, shouts its hallelujahs for the overthrow of the mighty, and, though the board is not spread, invites the hungry sons of men to the feast.

In no recent Advent has it been harder to recapture such a faith; and to-day none who put away from them the bitter cup of sorrow now offered to the world can hope to enter into the calm peace of that first morning. But to those who have been ready to pay the price, and to escape from a self-centred care for their own lives, light will arise in the darkness. The mighty will not be strong for ever. Things deemed of no account will yet be crowned. The things that are not will yet bring to nought the things that are. Courage! the past is with them. The present moment is in the heart of a history which bears the impress of One

Eternal Will bent upon one glorious and inevitable purpose.

The promise of light and safety from enemies is given in the "Benedictus." "Oriens ex alto!" The Dayspring from on high hath visited us. Light and safety were never separated in that Eastern world. Night meant foes; day brought peace. The Church can only sing this priestly song with stammering lips; but still it sings.

Now, for the first time in the experience of millions, the word "enemy" stands for a reality. They can think themselves back without effort into the ages from which come our familiar prayers for deliverance. Words which had become metaphors are charged with terror now. They know to-day something of the sufferings of Israel, hounded through the centuries by one foe after another. Once more mankind cries out—"What must I do to be saved?"

There are brains and bodies seeking above all things our destruction. But the roots of the trouble go deeper than the outward activities. There is evil incarnate to-day;

but before it took flesh it was within; and when one embodiment is destroyed it may become incarnate again. How can such evils be cut away? Cruelty, greed, lust, selfish ambition—these are enemies of the soul; who is to give any assurance that they can be done away? The Church of God cannot be content with anything less than the promise of safety from all the power of the enemy. It has a twofold answer; with one voice, strangely like the voice of pessimism, it cries, “There is no hope of deliverance from such evils by any disposition of human forces, or by any external treatment; the disease is too deep for that.” But the Day-spring has visited us. “There is within the House of Life,” the Church cries, “a Deliverer whose coming in each generation may be swift as an Orient Dawn, or slow; but when He comes, in His light is security and peace.” On every hand there is a recognition that the evils at the root of the present horrors can only be exorcised by a redemptive energy sweeping through the inner chambers of the soul. But whence is it to come?

There are many answers; some declare that there must be an access of inward light, or a new valuation, or a brotherhood of nations, based upon the goodwill which common-sense demands; others speak of an awakening to God—these are not exclusive one of the other; but what society can pronounce blessing upon the Eternal Lord and chant its calm praises without faltering, save a Church, which has already seen the Daybreak before which the enemies of the race must shrink? He will guide men into the way of peace. “In viam pacis.” Suddenly the men of this quiet day have seen all that their fathers saw; they have learned what war means, and therefore what peace means. Before 1914 the men of this age did not know peace as they will know it when they are redeemed from the horror of war. It is the redeemed who know the measure of the enemy—

“Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,
For He hath visited and redeemed His people!”

So the Church may pass to the lovely

cadences in which a dying age bids farewell in peace to the world. How can we sing the "Nunc Dimittis" in a world like this? A younger generation may hail without misgiving the coming of a new age. But the older men know that the world now dying held for them its own secret ideals, its faith, true though little—its wistful dreams. In that world there were many, like Simeon, who kept the fire burning upon the altar of the nation. The old is passing away; the landmarks are disappearing, and the tide is advancing. Will the new lose the good in the old with nothing to replace it? How can they greet the new in peace? Only in the faith that the change which is near will be the hour of liberation for the Church and the nation into a larger service.

Simeon hails the glory of Israel—the day of national fulfilment; but only as he sees in the Babe within his arms the promise of a light to lighten the Gentiles. Israel is to come to its glory when its light is set free in the perfect light, which shall be for all mankind. Israel comes to itself in the life of the

world. This is the song of faith in the hour of destruction and death. If this nation too is to reach that glory, which is the revelation of its true character to the world, it must be liberated into the service of humanity. A nation is glorious when there is no child of man who does not think himself the greater because he belongs to a race which includes a nation like that. The new age, therefore, must not be one of splendid isolation, but of untiring and generous service for the world. To this truth the Missionary Enterprise of the Church, too often dismissed as a by-product of religious zeal, has borne its witness; it has stood for the soul of the nation entering with its supreme treasure into the life of the non-Christian races, "debtor both to Greeks and to barbarians." Its agents were often greater than the world knew. Now in a fuller degree the nation, if it is to win its glory, must be set free from its weakness, and narrowness of vision, and slackness of soul into the service of the race, destined to fall or to rise as one mighty Being.

Tyre and Carthage have left little trace on

the spiritual history of the world; "no race told its dreams" to them: they shared no gift of universal value with the world. Greece, Rome, and Israel live because of the riches they gave. Greece did not deny to other races a share in the splendour of her thought and art; Rome built up a system which could safeguard justice in all lands; Israel dreamt of a day when of Zion it should be said, "This man and that man from Egypt or Babylon was born there." These nations have their glory because they passed out into the universal and enduring life of mankind.

The end must come when in the archives of eternity the story of this nation will lie completed. Its glory there will only be in its fidelity to the great human trusts and to one all-embracing Trust committed to its care. A nation may well dream of glory, but the Church can only mean by that word the freeing of the national soul from cowardice and self-indulgence and materialism into the Kingdom of God. They who believe that the new order will mean the entrance through

the death of the old into that glorious Kingdom may let the past go in peace and in a good hope that nothing will be lost—

“ For their eyes have seen His salvation ;
A light to lighten the Gentiles,
And the glory of His people Israel.”

THE STRANDS OF CHRISTMAS

CHRISTMAS, like all great and simple things, has many strands. The child does not analyse his delight; but afterwards those who still keep something of their former joy at this season are aware of many tones blended in the one harmony; the simple pattern is woven with many strands. They lose the former unquestioning acceptance of the Day as itself the one supreme self-evidencing rapture in all the year. They question, Why or whence has this come? But after all the analysis they are happiest who, if not in their own immediate experience, yet vicariously in the joy of their children, can re-find the lost simplicity.

Ancient memories troop back at Christmas. When December 25 dawned many a Roman soldier, keeping watch upon the Wall, remembered and worshipped Mithras, whose birthday it was, and down the line there rang

such a hymn as Kipling has written to "Mithras, also a soldier." When the Church in the third century chose this day to celebrate the Birthday of the Saviour, it was doubtless moved by the desire to celebrate the Birth of its Sun of Righteousness at the time when the rival worship of Mithras kept the day in honour of Sol Invictus—the Unconquered Sun. This may not have been the only motive for the choice of this day; long before the Advent of Christ the season had been one of rejoicing in Rome and in other lands; on many grounds it was a day predestined. The Wonder of Bethlehem had been left undated; the day in itself mattered little; it is indeed a gain for the Church to capture this time for its Adoring Worship of the Babe Jesus; for thereby it gathers into its tradition many almost forgotten memories of man's childhood. Christ came not to destroy but to fulfil; and through the date of the year assigned to Him, the Church is for ever conscious of roads, shading away into mystery, along which the old joys and hopes of an incredibly remote past are carried down to us.

The turning of the year, when the night begins to recede, had always been a time when Nature called the sons of men to laughter and rejoicing. The worst was over; the Sun, long driven back, now turned on the darkness; and men always knew themselves "children of the sun." Nor is that bond snapped; to this hour every imaginative mind is drawn to the Sun—

"It may be so; but let the unknown be,
We on this earth are servants of the sun;
Out of the sun comes all the quick in me;
His golden touch is life to everyone."

Even those who have never thought of Christmas as the Festival of the Return of the Sun are conscious that it marks in some way a season of change. It falls at an hour when the word of courage and patience is sought; and it is given. A Festival in the long days of June would be different; that would be of sight; this is of faith. It is a birthday in which we are assured of promises and glories yet to be.

Many unnamed instincts and memories are

moving within us at this time. It is set down as a reproach by some austere thinkers that the Church was willing to carry over so much from the past. The break with the old should have been more complete, they declare; and it is true that many things might have been forgotten without loss; but not the season of the Unconquered Sun! That seemed predestined for the Sun, Who arose with healing in His wings; and through Bethlehem the faithful can always establish links with the hearts that rejoiced not knowing Him Who should come.

Those former joys are but an undertone, however, in the music. It is the memory of Bethlehem, and of the Life, which entered there into our human scene, that absorbs and consecrates all the desires and hopes of the earlier time. Even those who give no thought directly to the Coming of Jesus owe their Christmas feeling more than they can tell to that story. Childhood knows this; for there is an affinity between that story and the heart of childhood; and it is only through the borrowed vision of the child that older

men can see the Manger again with its heavenly light—

“ Grey-hair’d children come in crowds
Thee, their Hope, to greet.”

But with that memory of the Historic Life there is blended the thought of a timeless Christmas. The Irish peasants keep their doors open on Christmas Eve to welcome the bewildered travellers, Joseph and Mary, and to provide a place for the Heavenly Babe to enter. That is the true spirit of the Carol. It deals with the story of a Birth long ago in Jewry, but it is a birth mystically repeated within the soul. Perhaps for many strained and perplexed minds on this day the experience of the new birth within is all-important. “ Just in proportion as our own heart is virgin, unwedded to any other than God, free from egotism and self-seeking, God takes flesh within us : the answer comes in the quickening of our own capacities to bring God to birth. He lies in our bosom and gives Himself to us to be nurtured and brought up in our own home.” ¹ It is this mystical Christ-

¹ “ The Incarnation and Prayer ” (H. A.), reprinted by *The Challenge*.

mas experience in which many rejoice as they kneel beside the Manger.

There are many interpreters of this season who have sung the romance of Bethlehem; the contrasts have been dear to all bold artists and poets—

“ The Babe looked up and showed His face,
In spite of darkness it was day ; ”

there in the company are Milton and Herbert and Vaughan, and modern singers such as Christina Rossetti and Francis Thompson; our tongue has not failed in giving glory to the Holy Child; and through the familiar hymns and carols something of the wonder is carried to all men, even in a day when the soul does not readily take wings for such flights.

But with that Christmas there is united inseparably for all of our race the Christmas of Dickens; the classical expression of this is in the chapter where Mr. Pickwick and his friends tramp the hard roads to the merry farm of Mr. Wardle. For Dickens it is not a festival greatly concerned with mysticism; it is a season of generous friendship and laughter, and

great human sympathy. Dickens belonged to an age in which it was necessary to restore to religion its footing in the soil of humanity. The heart had protested against the inhumanity of man to his fellow—against the lack of brotherly love and mercy—against the entrance of Pharisaism into the Christian Church. They who know how much this protest was needed will welcome the humanity which Dickens gives to Christmas. Few modern writers are uninfluenced by the same concern for this earthward side of the Mystery. Indeed, the modern seer is in danger of forgetting that the human glow was kindled from a Heavenly Torch; to him the one clear vision is that of humanity in its bitter sorrow; he may forget the “Gloria in Excelsis Deo” in the other vision—

“ I see no hillsides grey with sheep,
 I meet no Magi on the road;
 I see the crippled beggar creep,
 Striving to stand beneath his load.”

But there is no need for us to choose between these many Christmastides. They are one in the heart of childhood. Later we grow

wise and discover what are the rays of light which blended in that former glory; but later we grow wiser still; we return gratefully to childhood's Christmas, content to worship and to love and to hope.

“ THE CENTRE OF ETERNITY ”

FOR HOLY WEEK 1918

“ THAT Centre of Eternity, that Tree of Life in the midst of the Paradise of God ! There are we entertained with the wonder of all ages. There we enter into the heart of the universe.” The Cross is no less central to-day than in the hour when Thomas Traherne found in it the heart of all things. Even for those whose vision takes into it only the human scene there is no more moving story ; for them the Cross stands as the summary of the human tragedy ; there the soul of man utters itself in one brief moment ; in the Figure of Jesus Crucified men read the sorrows of the world gathered into one burning point.

The last word, even for those who have no living faith in any spiritual world, has been spoken ; the race is crucified with Christ. If there is no Holy of Holies, into which He

passed, if He died and never arose, they find in Him still the mournful story of a race, contracted into one tragic scene. This is the meaning of the human story; this is the centre of the world.

But Christian Faith deals with the Cross as *the Centre of Eternity*. To that vision, it may well be, the nations are being led by their fellowship with the Man of Sorrows. At first He may be that and no more; nations crucified may hail Him in the bond of a common woe; yet their artists and seers may pass through that vision of the Cross to a richer vision.

One nation, itself crucified beyond the power of words to set forth, through its art has spoken already new words concerning the Cross. M. Mestrovic, the Serbian sculptor, gave his skill and genius before the war largely to the glory of his nation; since the war brought again upon his people their ancient sorrows, he has been absorbed with the story of Jesus, and for him the Gospel has for its centre the Cross, the tall bare Cross, upon which the dead Saviour hangs. This

one supremely great artist, rising out of a crucified nation, has poured out his soul in his revelation of the Cross. It has become once more central for him; and central not alone in the human scene; already it is dimly understood to carry in it the secret of the eternal scene. It becomes the measure of the world, and the clue to eternity. It is the last decisive word upon the character of the universe. In it the mystery of God discloses itself.

For this is the all-important question—What is the character and purpose of God? The Gospel of Christ has one answer; but it is not the only answer. The name of God is a mysterious and hidden name; men have read into the same word a thousand values. They have made Him after their own likeness, but the copy of their own character scored upon the immense canvas of eternity with all the pettiness of earth clinging to Him. The Name has called up to the mind thoughts of Majesty, Power, Splendour, Eternity; but the heart is not satisfied. It waits for another word to be spoken.

The significance of the Cross lies in the fact that there another word is spoken upon the character of the Eternal Spirit. Faith has found in the Tragedy of Calvary a shaft into the heart of all things. It stands there at the centre. The secret disclosed there in the limits of humanity is a secret of infinite moment. It is not another attribute ascribed to the Eternal Lord. It is His innermost purpose disclosed. It is Himself.

To this centre all that is most real in the awakening of the souls of the nations will tend. “As on every side all heavy things tend to the centre, so all nations ought on every side to flow into it.” The leaders of imagination and thought will move that way; poets will retake the way that leads to the eternal spring of love, and hope, and beauty. The men who seek to rebuild the world will make this their centre. Everything depends upon the vision that masters them, and that vision, if it is to be an enduring source of energy, must be a vision of God. With that, as the centre, there is no task which may not be attempted. If that is lacking, and there

is no pattern in the heavens, and no redeeming action within human affairs from the Eternal Lord, then the springs of motive are soon exhausted.

The believers of the future will not be content to build their churches cruciform; they will stamp the Cross upon all things. It will mean for them the death of any order which is built upon greed and contempt and violence; the Cross for those who will see it freshly will be more than a display of passive endurance, as though God, smitten on one cheek, turned the other. That indeed He did; but in that hour He will be seen with wonder entering and claiming and subduing man to His just and constraining Love, and there He will give His value to every soul, now "the brother for whom Christ died." In the days to come the men of faith will find in the Cross a strangely active and moving power. And such believers will be at the centre.

In other departments of letters or art the distinction has been made between those who are of the centre and those, on the other hand, who are one-sided, lacking in grasp,

fumbling, unbalanced. The distinction may be made in the story of the Church. Sometimes it has been at the centre; at other times, even though its professions remained the same, it has been faltering, and easily misled, with no sense of proportion, and little steadiness of purpose.

The test of centrality can be found in the insight which is revealed into the meaning of the Cross. Where that is made the centre there is at once a certain calmness and grasp, and a singular power over the thoughts and emotions of men. The Church which has its centre in this great faith can afford to be calm, for it has there its footing in eternity. It does not give the appearance of a body for ever striving after a centre and for ever missing it. There are left ten thousand mysteries; but one thing is proclaimed without doubt. The Church declares that it speaks only in symbols and can only use words which must always fail, and yet it glories in one certainty. Let the soul press inward and ever inward into the reality of things, it will never cease to find at the heart of the universe a Cross.

COR MUNDUM

THE CLEANSING OF MOTIVE ; FOR WHITSUNTIDE

IN any prolonged effort of the spirit of man there is certain to come a stage of peril ; it is threatened by degeneration ; there is an almost imperceptible lowering of the pitch ; the actions are for a time the same, *but the motives are changed* ; a work begun for certain reasons does not cease, but it is continued for other, and lower reasons. Man gives his body to be burned still, but he has not love, and therefore he is nothing.

Against this danger the nation must be on its guard. Man is more capable of a sudden effort than of a long campaign ; he can keep his motives pure, while he makes a dash for victory, but if victory is deferred he is tempted to substitute motives less ideal for those which have failed him. In this war he may win his victory ; but *the value of victory depends*

largely upon the motive, for every victory is only the beginning of a new enterprise, the release of the human spirit into a new field; and what if the spirit so released has changed ! What if it has won its world, and lost its purity of vision and purpose ! Of this there is some danger to-day.

No one who candidly surveys the nation of to-day can fail to mark some falling-away. Observers will not agree upon the extent; some think the process has already gone far, others detect only the dangerous symptoms. However little or much of degeneration may be detected, there is need for a grave warning; they who have any power to deal with the motives of the nation cannot be idle. For the future as well as for the perilous moment in which the nation is set, there is need for the prayer that a clean heart may be created and preserved within us.

The nation has endured a prolonged strain; it has had much to suggest the inefficacy of idealism; the first dash has spent itself; it is tempted to take other weapons than those in which it has trusted, out of the armoury.

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There is a danger of making a composition with the methods and ideals openly advocated by other nations. The nation may even come to think of itself as in danger of mere Pharisaeism when it sets forth its ideal aims. Why not take the world as it is and not be righteous overmuch?

But once at least the nation knew the power of the nobler motives. With all the terror that surrounds the memory of August 1914 there lives for all men of this race a certain exaltation of the spirit as that day is recalled. There were perils known and unknown; without were fightings, within were fears; yet the heart of this nation was never purer than then! But the pure gold is tarnished. Motives which then made the youth of this country leap into the ranks are not so mighty. They must be regained, and they can be regained; but something must be done to diagnose and to heal the evil.

In any estimate of moral action, whether of nations or Churches or individual lives, *motive is almost everything*. St. Paul, that matchless teacher of ethics, has vindicated

the place of motive in his eulogy of love; students of theology might approach this great and inspired writer with more sympathy when he speaks of the spiritual world, if they remembered how entirely right he has proved to be as an ethical guide. "If I speak," he said, "with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, I am become as sounding brass or a clanging cymbal." This in his own life he has once attempted to do; he has spoken, and acted, and sacrificed with a boundless energy, yet without love, and he knows that he has failed; his hymn is a recantation of his old life. Motive is everything. But this has its application to the policy of nations; they may spend their wealth, and squander their lives, and yet if they are without love—that steady devotion to the supreme good of others—that wild joyful passion for holy causes—that self-forgetful surrender to the Love of God—*they are nothing*. The absence of the true motive does not merely injure a life, it ruins it entirely. It is not a flaw, it is death to do even right things from false motives.

Such a teacher as St. Paul is always needed in a world like this, where men must strive and watch and pray if they are to keep their purity of eye, and of heart. The stakes are very high. They are always high in the game of life. To live and to serve with the true motive is to win everything; to be without that motive is to lose everything. Without love a nation is nothing.

When, therefore, the duty of the Church in time of war is considered, this cannot be forgotten—the Church must bear witness against any intrusion of base motives, and where such motives have crept in, it must use *its ancient power to cast out devils*. This is an exorcism, which may well remain among the offices of the Church—to cast out the spirit, which in the name of expediency and utility has supplanted the pure spirit of devotion to the great human causes. If in place of a passion to defend the oppressed there steals into the heart of a people a blind hate for the wrongdoer; if disinterested service to the weaker nations becomes swamped in the desire for gain in territory and commerce;

if the belief is disinterred that certain nations are beyond the range of repentance, then the Church has a plain duty to the inner life of the nation. However unworthy it count itself for the task, it must witness for the pure heart; and to the evil spirit it must cry in the power of its own holy calling, "We charge thee in the name of God to come out of this nation." Or if this seem a not sufficiently modern way of setting forth this duty, the Church must be vigilant and fearless both to see and to denounce all fallings-away from the first clean motives. It must seek to be *the Moral Guide and Counsellor of the nation*, for ever standing on the side of its nobler aims, and for ever burning away in the power of the Spirit all false and debasing motives.

In the power of the Spirit! That is the only power which is sufficient to purify the soul of a people. Over against the process of degeneration, which everywhere threatens the soul, there is the process of renewal. "Then I saw in my dream that the Interpreter took Christian by the hand, and led him into a place where was a fire burning against a

wall, and one standing by it always, casting much water upon it, to quench it; yet did the fire burn higher and hotter"; for there was One with the oil of His grace behind the wall, and from this vessel He did continually cast, but secretly, into the fire. It is of such a hidden but unbroken supply of grace that Whitsuntide speaks. Happy is the nation which has within its very heart a Church which is concerned most of all to be the means whereby the Eternal Spirit of Love and Power and Justice keeps alive upon the altar the pure and clean and purifying fires! Victory for such a nation will have no perils; it will be but the release upon the world of a healing and cleansing and creative power.

FOR ASCENSION-TIDE

THE LINKED WORLDS

MAN has never escaped from the thought that he belongs to two worlds; for some this is only a surmise, for others a joyful faith, but few can dismiss it for long. Life appears to be a scene with two panels; earth and heaven, seen and unseen—both are his. The one without the other is imperfect. If he has earth only, man is restless and hungry; if in his despair he forsakes earth, and flies to an antedated heaven, he deserts his team; he cannot be at peace; he is missing the distinctive gifts of this earth. Two worlds indeed are his, both mysterious, both inevitable, and somehow they are related. *But how?* Is there a ladder? What traffic is there between the two worlds?

It has been the province of faith from the beginning to answer these questions; from

the dawn of man's thought religion has been busy discovering or forging links between the two worlds. It has never been content to provide for the soul a heaven unrelated to earth, still less to limit its hopes and promises to the human scene. Jacob saw the ladder; Moses went into the thick darkness where God was; Isaiah beheld the Lord high and lifted up; all revelation brings with it an increasing sense of commerce between the two worlds, and the note of triumph sounded at Ascension-tide reaffirms every vision given to man, and crowns every hope of his, and robs him of every dread.

Since man has attempted to link the two worlds he has used and will still use the language of movement; he has seen in the midnight skies "the ghost of his eternity"; and since the heavens shining above him have been the emblem of divinity, to ascend has always been the way into the eternal world. The language once minted has never been withdrawn. But it is enough for the Church to declare with triumph at this season that the two worlds are not separated, for *they*

have interests in common, and they share One Name. It is in the joy of this discovery that the Church may greet the troubled heart of to-day.

They who have believed in the truth of the Ascension find the unseen world singularly near and friendly. They set forth their faith in the only language which human lips can use for realities beyond the range of figures and symbols. But they are in a universe which they have ceased to dread. *It is no palace of infinity ; it is a home ;* it is linked to this earth by no chain of angels merely, but by the Son of Man in Whom they move freely on either plane. "Eternity is manifest in the Light of the Day." They make the most of each world because they are citizens of both. They do not cease to desire the City of God because they have something of its joy and peace already within. It is such a confidence that is needed by many wounded spirits to-day.

If only they knew more of the other world ! So many are setting out upon that journey ; a cloud hides them ; they have said farewell,

and passed into a way down which it is hard to see more than a few steps. What is there in common between their new home and this where they were known? Is there any common link? May we know—

“ Whether ’tis ampler day divinelier lit
Or homeless night without? ”

In the presence of this question, whatever answer can be given will be eagerly heard; for the character of that other world makes all the difference to man’s estimate of this. If the worlds have anything in common, it cannot be a matter of indifference to learn what that is. If it is all that faith claims, nothing less than the reign over both worlds of the glorified Son of Man, then there is comfort for all who have surrendered their friends to that unseen world. *It is to Him, not to it, that they look*; and in the Ascended Lord there is the pledge that this earthly scene is carried into eternity; He who brought heaven to earth has lifted earth to heaven. Enriched with human experience, Himself the Pledge and Surety of the final humanity,

the Son of Man has passed into the Unseen. At Ascension-tide the Christian Church rejoices in the crowning of human life through the victory of its Divine Redeemer; with boldness it declares that nothing of His workmanship or of His travail is lost; its bids the sorrowful look into the vast and dim eternity, and see the One Face that can make it a home.

And therefore they who leave before their time are not cut away from all that kindled pride and hope in their brief life; they may not come down the ladder, but faith knows that they are in a world which shares something—and that the greatest thing—with this world; and they may “keep their surprises till we come,” but something not altogether strange, not unfamiliar, is theirs. This confidence comes with the Christian Faith in the Ascension. The mode of the Divine Life, revealed on earth in Galilee and Zion, is changed; but in that new mode He lives, and He in His spiritual energy still is within the human scene. He convinces the sons of men that He lives. “Vado et venio—I go away and I come again”; and because

of that assurance the mourner to-day sees the lost friend, living indeed in a new mode, but sharing as the Son of Man shares in the eternal glory which stretches like a perfect arc over both worlds.

FOR TRINITY SUNDAY

THE PHILOSOPHER AND THE WAYFARING MAN

THERE are few philosophers and many wayfaring men; but the Church in its provisions has often remembered the philosopher, and forgotten the needs of the plain man; and for this reason *it has seldom done justice to the strength of its own doctrines*. Where it should have gloried it has timidly apologised, and it has failed to commend to men the very truths for which they were groping all the time. The doctrine, treated as an intellectual proposition, has not always convinced the philosopher, and, divorced as it has been from the moral and spiritual experience of the wayfaring saint, it has become cold and forbidding.

This is true without doubt of the Doctrine recalled at this season; the sublime teaching of the Church that God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit has a powerful appeal to the heart

of man, *where it is not severed from the experience of the human soul*; but when it is detached, and considered as an intellectual thesis only, it leaves men wondering and bewildered. The strength of the Doctrine lies still, where it rose—in the Christian heart, thinking over in wonder the experiences it has had of redemption and new life. The Church, both here and everywhere, is strong when it does not forget the wayfaring man. Till it remembers him it will seek vainly to win the philosopher, and it will lose the ear of the saint.

Too often it has separated that which God has joined together—metaphysics from ethics, theology from experimental religion, heaven from earth; and it pays a heavy price. It has within its gift a singularly wonderful and satisfying doctrine of the Eternal Godhead, but this is at the same time “the profoundest, and therefore the most intelligible, attempt to express the indwelling of God in man.” To separate the one from the other is to do justice to neither. They are not two doctrines, but one; the Eternal Being, for ever to be adored,

is He Who has revealed Himself to humanity, and has given to humble and contrite heart His Spirit. At every point of its intellectual life the Church must remind itself *that it is dealing with the orderly and logical expression of living experiences*. As soon as the character of the material is forgotten the creed tends to become an enigma for all but the subtle mind.

In the New Testament a "mystery" is not a truth left dark, but a truth once hidden and now revealed. The Doctrine of the Holy Trinity, so far as it is to be found in the thought of the first saints, was not a mystery in the modern use of the word; it was rather a revelation in experience; with that most clear material the beginning is made. "They thought of the All-Sovereign God and Father of the Universe; His Son, Jesus Christ, in Whom His character and love were revealed as active for man's salvation; and the Holy Spirit that Divine energy within them." So far they were dealing with realities, which to them were radiantly clear and self-evidencing. Once hidden, this God, Whose energy they

knew within their own hearts and consciences and wills, was now revealed. The data of all the doctrines of the Church were there.

Still the strength of the doctrine of the Godhead lies simply in the fact *that it is the inevitable interpretation of moral and spiritual acts, prolonged through the generations of human lives*. The weakness of much in the traditional use of doctrine lies in its remoteness from human experience. Instead of being the joyful testimony of all the saints, the doctrine becomes the solution proffered to speculative minds. Instead of being the triumphant cry of faith, it becomes the material for a chapter upon philosophy. Once the very words, which are repeated coldly to-day, were the intellectual expression of the most central and creative moments in the moral and spiritual life of mankind. The Church was driven by the logic of its own spiritual life to put out into the deep mysteries of the eternal world; and the value for men of its creeds will depend upon the re-discovery of the moral and spiritual processes which led to them.

Trinity Sunday falls at the end of the cycle

of great festivals. But the Church cannot forget, as it comes to that day, all the way through the revelation of the Divine Life, whereby it has been led. The Church does not keep this day as a day reserved for its philosophers, who now have their turn. It keeps the day for the saints, who do not forget all that they have seen and experienced and loved, and carry the light of these things still in their eyes. The day is one for every soul that has understood the power of the new life through the Spirit. These are able to adore the Holy, Blessed, and Glorious Trinity because they have known afresh in their own hearts those intimate and searching dealings, the interpretation of which the mind of the Church sought to capture and to hold in the doctrine.

There will never fail in humanity a line of daring minds who push out into the deeps of Godhead to the very limits, beyond which the human eye cannot range. But even they cannot move without the data given in the experiences which they share with the humblest saint. And they, the daring pioneers,

are few; the humble saints are many. At all costs *the community of interest between those who are at one in their experiences of the Christian life must be remembered.* The Church which forgets the saints and remembers only the philosophers will not keep even the philosophers.

The Church therefore must go back again and again over the path whereby it was led; and, remembering how the hearts of men were once brought by the way of a living faith to affirm their creeds, the Church will never fail to re-translate the language of its past into the language of the heart, still known and read of all men.

THE APPLICATION

AFTER TRINITY

THE weakness in much preaching lies in the application. Long and careful preparations are made, and little happens; the hearer is led to the point where he is driven to ask, "What then follows?" and he is left unanswered. It is not so in the mighty preaching of the New Testament; there every truth is pressed home upon the conscience and will; the believers who first listened to the letters of St. Paul were not left in doubt what must follow; they knew the practical bearing of the truth, and the practice threw new light upon the doctrine. Faith was never left in the air.

Preaching needs to regain its former authority; it will not win it by a hasty discarding of theology, but by its courage in refusing to separate theology into two departments—

abstract truth and the moral application; it must be bold enough to drive the truth home into the last innermost citadel of the human will. So once again preaching will become vital and real. There will be the thrill that comes when things happen. The hearer will know that the preacher will finish his task, and at the last will leave him aware that now there must be a difference in his life; things can never be the same again, if these things are so. Those who are not ready to face reality will stay away. Others will hear and live.

There is a danger that besets every man whose craft deals with words: he is tempted to revel in big sounding generalities, which are in the part. Sentimentality is his besetting sin. The words outpace the moral insight of the speaker; fancy and imagination are confused in him with faith; he can enjoy the unfolding of certain beliefs without stopping to consider what is the only possible life for a man who says such things. From such an unreality there is always one safeguard, which belongs to the preacher by reason of his creed;

the answer to truth must be made in the field of moral purpose and action; the word preached therefore must fail till it becomes flesh. Nothing is won unless the conscience and will are surrendered.

Through the festivals of the Christian year the Church has passed once more; now many Sundays remain for the re-calling and enforcement of the amazing and transforming truths which have been set forth. Some difference must be made if these things are so. The scene of human life, it appears, must be interpreted in the light of eternal facts, of divine words, and divine acts, which are either everything or nothing. Things cannot be left now. If they are true something follows. But what? Till that question is answered the preaching is unfinished.

It is a mistake, indeed, for a preacher to divide his doctrine from its moral implications. Here the safest guide is incomparably the New Testament. No one can separate in its pages the strands of doctrine from the ethical teaching; the books are illustrations of faith in action. The reader is absorbed

with the problem of slavery when he is suddenly compelled to remember the ground-fact of the redeemed life. He is listening to the words of the Apostle upon the duties of husbands and wives, when without any transition he is bidden to behold the Church, without spot or wrinkle, the pure bride of the Heavenly Bridegroom. If he thinks of the Cross, he is told to forgive, as he has been forgiven, or to go without the camp bearing His reproach. No reader of the New Testament can ever shut his ears to the application; he has no warning when it is coming; it is always at hand. So it must be in vital preaching. Whether the hearers desire it or not, they must be made to know what is involved for them in the word. "He always converts someone," it was said of a Port Royal preacher; and Sainte-Beuve adds, "One day that someone was Pascal." For such preaching it is not enough to unfold a scheme of truth; men like Blaise Pascal are not led to the last surrender until the truth is driven home mercilessly upon the final innermost hold of the spirit,

There is a response of the emotional life; there is a kindling of the intellect as it follows the message; but preaching falls short till it awakens a response from man as conscience and will; for the greatest concern in human life—and here Bunyan and Matthew Arnold agree—is the practical part. A belief is not primarily something to be confessed in words, but to be worked out in the moral life—

“ For still the Lord is Lord of might;
In deeds, in deeds He takes delight.”

But this is no plea for the dropping of doctrines; they are charged with moral power when they are rightly understood. It is a plea that they should be seen through to their inevitable expression. It is not enough to preach that the Eternal Son emptied Himself, unless it is also made clear that the same mind must be in His disciples; they, too, must empty themselves. To believe in the Holy Trinity is to be pledged for ever to a life of fellowship; personality must be won by such a believer in fellowship. To believe in the Cross is to look upon every man as the brother for whom Christ died, and to treat

him so. Every doctrine will become luminous when it is received not only with its comforts but with its demands, loyally accepted and obeyed.

No one wishes from the preacher a code of regulations like a sumptuary law; and no one would make him like the player on a pleasant instrument, delighting the ear and not disturbing the conscience. The preacher, for whom there is room and always will be room, is the man who declares the truth committed to him, with all that it involves; he may not know what will happen, but so far as he is concerned, he is determined that lives shall be transformed in their very centre if the truth is accepted. Preaching for such a man is no function to be undertaken or carried out light-heartedly. But only such preaching can justify itself before a people awakened to moral issues.

SICUT CREDIDISTI, FIAT TIBI

PRAYER AND FAITH

ACCORDING to the faith of the man who prays, so it will be done unto him; according to his faith not first of all in prayer, *but in God*. Prayer is a sensitive instrument by which the central belief of a man or a Church is registered. It is communion; but *with What? or with Whom?* Prayer can never be detached and studied apart; it can neither be attacked nor defended apart from the interpretation of God upon which it rests. Both the neglect of prayer and its many variations can be traced to varying beliefs in the character of God; each has a prayer that corresponds to it.

From the communion between Caliban and Setebos to the fellowship of the Beloved Disciple with the Lord, on Whose breast he lay, there are many grades in prayer. How

many intonations there are in the human voice as it speaks to God ! But these have been prompted by the many expressions caught by mankind upon the Divine Face. What shadows and gleams have fallen from that Face !

There are many who, in the secret of their hearts, when the door is shut, can only say, "He is God, and not man." In their practical life this is the working creed. He is remote and almost inaccessible. For them the master-thought is always—how different He is ! They can only think of Him in words of contrast. Since this is their belief, prayer for them takes a character that corresponds ; it is sometimes little more than a cry across a deep and wide gulf or a sigh of resignation : "He is Great ; His will be done !"

Under the pressure of loss and anxiety since the war began many have turned to prayer, but their creed gives them only this distant Other Being. An unreality creeps into their prayer. They begin to doubt whether any answer can come. Prayer becomes a monologue ; God never answers. The

traditional words, which come back to them from childhood, are based upon another faith. Their prayer breaks down, because there is no correspondence between the longings, which are on their lips, and their creed. God is too far away for their voices to reach to Him. They cannot whisper "Abba Father!" in His ears. At its noblest this prayer to a Distant God has awe and humility, and these are needed in every approach to God; but it breaks down, and the tragedy lies in the attempt to improvise prayer without a sufficient faith upon which it can rest.

There are others for whom God is the name for the sum of all things. Man is His dwelling-place. He is within, unknown except as within; and with that Dweller in the Innermost the soul has joyful communion. Such a belief also has its prayer. Who can doubt the value of that divine dialogue? It leaves a refreshment upon which the soul may live for many days. Prayer is a real experience for such mystical souls; and much of their joy and peace may be coveted by all who hunger after God. But prayer for them has

its dangers and limitations. It recognises how the barriers between the temporal and the eternal vanish—how the Many and the One may be related, but too often *it ignores the estrangement between man in his guilt and the Holy God*. Its God is near; He dwells within; He is the overflowing life of the world; but is He still the Lord of conscience to Whom the cry mounts from penitent hearts—

“ Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned,
And done that which is evil in Thy sight ” ?

If there is failure here it is always a failure to think perfectly of God.

In its popular teaching the Christian Church has often wavered between two beliefs. Prayer has been allowed to become through the lack of sound teaching an address to a Just and Remote Majesty on the one hand, or on the other a meditation and ecstasy prompted by the Indwelling Spirit. But the Church has its own definite interpretation of the Divine Character and Purpose. It cannot define prayer except in relation to *that*. It must always pray “ in the name of Jesus

Christ"; that is, it must always order its prayer in harmony with the revelation of God in His Gospel; it must speak and deal always with that God and that God alone, Who shined in the hearts of men to give the light of the knowledge of His glory in the face of Jesus Christ. There are phases of His life still hidden; but the Church in prayer has to deal with that revelation, mysterious and distinctive, which is entrusted to its charge. The faith in the God and Father of Jesus Christ has a prayer that corresponds; that is Christian prayer.

The Church fails when it lacks the courage to accept to its full its own master-truth, and to push it through to the logical conclusions. It may shrink back upon other and more timid beliefs, but in boldness lies the way of safety. What, then, will be the distinctive character of prayer in the name of Christ?

The soul that prays in That Name has not to choose between the prayer that is addressed to the Distant Being, the Eternal Other; and the prayer which is communion with the Divine Self within. At once he knows that his

God is other than he; but other, not on the ground of His eternity, or His majesty, but *on the ground of His holy love*. It is not distance, or brevity of years, or weakness that parts the soul from its Lord; *it is sin*. For the Church it is impossible to pray, save as it is humbled with arms outstretched to That Other—The Divine Love, which is wounded and bruised for the transgressions of the world. At the same time the soul that prays in the name of Christ knows that it could not pray were there not within the Spirit prompting and pleading. He, too, has his Dweller in the Innermost—that Other Comforter, Who abides for ever—that prolonged activity of the Redeemer in the surrendered life. So at once the God of the Christian Faith is far and near. In His grace He fills the Throne; He is yet the Spirit of His grace, dwells within intimately, real and personal. He is above all things, yet in them all. He is the High and Holy One to Whom the soul can still speak in the language of personal love.

Therefore, prayer offered to such a God has

a strange blending of humility and audacity. The soul is infinitely low at the feet of its God; but at the same time it claims power through the Spirit. Since prayer is not a human act only, but the action of the Divine Lord within a human life, it comes to have a reality of its own. It can no more be a mere show than the earthly life of the Lord Himself could be a mere show. It is a true way for the release into the world of Divine energies. *A true way because it is in entire harmony with the Perfect Way.* Things happen because of prayer offered in such a world, as that which is revealed in the Gospel. Prayer is a derived but real Incarnation. They who pray surrender a highway to the Divine Lord, and because of Him they act upon the moral life of the world. That there should be an entrance of Divine Life and Love through the opening up of a human will in prayer is not strange, given the Christian Revelation; but only on such a premiss. It is here that the Church halts and trembles. It ought to pray in the full light of its faith. But that seems too great a claim to make; it means that

prayer is the appointed way for the Church and its children to reign with Christ upon the earth. That is, we think, too high a calling. Therefore, it seems as though the voice of its Lord has need to say still: *Hitherto ye have asked nothing in My name.* It is strange to think that so amazing a power has been left unexplored. What would happen if the Church really believed to the full its own faith, and dared to pray the only prayer that is worthy of such a Faith?

VENITE ADOREMUS

THOUGHTS UPON PRESENT-DAY WORSHIP

No religion can live without worship; no worship can be offered except "with bent head and beseeching hands." There must be adoration in the response made by the soul to the Eternal Majesty. *Adoration is the mark of worship, where the Church thinks first of its Lord, and only afterwards of its own needs.* It is itself an answer to a previous Word of Truth and Mercy and Power. The absence of adoration from the worship of a Church is evidence that the worshippers think of the Unseen World as a source of supplies from which humanity may draw in its misery and poverty. They are not approaching with their gold, frankincense, and myrrh; they are more concerned with the gifts which they will carry away. They assemble that they may receive, not first of all that they may

give. The homely language of business life would be more fitting, but adoration uses the glorious and reckless language of first love.

Many witnesses agree that this lyrical note of adoration is missing from much of our present-day worship. If that is so, there is reason for a fearless inquiry into the meaning of the loss; it is not that one movement out of many is left out of the music and it is therefore poorer. The whole character of worship is changed if the Church ceases to adore its Redeemer, and the worship is changed because of a change in the vision of God. This is the serious question—*in what manner of God does a Church believe when it ceases to adore Him?*

When it is proposed that a Day of National Prayer shall be decreed, the air is full of expectation that after such a day a favourable reaction will be set up within the hearts that pray. It is agreed on all hands that such a day would do good; and why? Because the nation will draw from its God new courage, and hope, and patience, and even victory. The ingenuous character of such pleas is the most convincing evidence that

the thought of worship as a practical gain to mankind is the only one that occurs to many, both without the Church and within. But a Day of National Prayer can be worth little if it is not a day when with bared heads and wondering hearts a nation first of all acknowledges and adores the Eternal Justice and Truth. *It is nothing if the worshipping host does not seek first the kingdom of God and His glory.* There are many who would account adoration a weakness; it is not getting to business; but it is itself the evidence that the worshipping Church is drawing near in reality to the Eternal God, and is entering into the secret place of the Most High. The Church that dwells entirely upon the practical gains of religion in the end does less for mankind than the Church, which before all things lives for the glory of God.

The Church does not lack the language of adoration. Its inherited words are spoken calmly to-day, and are analysed as school-boys might analyse the "Ode to a Skylark." But those words were once like wings upon which the souls of the redeemed soared into the innermost secrets of God. The words are

still used, but they may be as unbecoming as the song of the first love of youth on the lips of a middle-aged unromantic man arranging a marriage of considerable profit to himself. Sometimes in an hour of sober worship the people will rise to sing one of those rapturous outbursts which date themselves—

“ O Love Divine, how sweet Thou art !
When shall I find my willing heart
All taken up by Thee ? ”

At once the worshippers are carried back to days when words like these were warm and living. Now they are sung coldly and formally. But they are there to remind the Church of the past; and in days of weariness and neglect they witness against it. “ I have this against thee, that thou hast left thy first love.” Thanks to its sacred books, thanks to its liturgies and hymns, the Church can never forget the lyrical note. And it can always be recovered.

The Psalms will never cease to prolong the note of an austere and passionate adoration. In the midst of the crabbed and involved style of St. Paul there are outbursts of glowing devotion: “ O the depth of the

riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! . . . For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things; to Whom be glory for ever." The exile in Patmos heard bursts of heavenly music. The liturgies of the Church have carried down the ages the same melody. *There is no lack in the tradition.* The blame, if there is a loss of pure adoration, must be found in the vision of to-day. In the study of any failure in the religious life, there is always one cause to which every line of inquiry leads. Religion fails only because it thinks falsely or imperfectly of God. Every defect can be traced back to that.

There will be adoration only when a Church or a nation thinks greatly and wonderingly of God. Men only adore a Being of Whom they can say "He is all-in-all"—

"We know Thee, each in part,
A portion small;
But love Thee as Thou art,
The All-in-all:
For reason, and the rays thereof,
Are starlight to the noon of Love."

Failure in worship can only come because the Church does not turn to its God as the One in Whom all excellences are to be found,

all Truth and Beauty, as well as all Love and Power. It is not enough to have this faith correctly set forth in the books. Too often in such a time as this in the real thought of the Church there is a certain reserve; some part of the devotion of the heart is held back in worship. God is known to many as Truth, but not as Beauty, and their devotion to Beauty must be paid outside the Temple. Others see him as Love, but not as Justice. Others worship the Creator, but keep another and dearer altar for the Son of Man. But adoration falters unless the Being adored is the one in whom all the longings of the spirit can be satisfied. Our adoration falters because of *our imperfect and hesitating and confused thoughts of God*. He is less than All-in-all to our age.

The Psalms are models of worship, not because the singers had seen the last vision of the Eternal World, but because that which they beheld claimed and received all the homage of their being—

“ Bless the Lord, O my soul,
And *all that is within me*, bless His holy name.”

Whatever new light might be given, no people could ever give more than they gave of devotion. Nothing was kept back. They revealed in their religious life an utter self-surrender to their Lord. What people can do more? What people, seeing the vision, dare do less?

For all its ills the Church has but one remedy. It must first think greatly of its God; it must think out afresh all that its Revelation and Redemption mean; it cannot be content to hesitate and to halt outside the amazing vision of God, which it must reach if it is prepared to follow its Lord. The way is a narrow way; but it leads into a wealthy place. They who began at the Cross to see God were led by that way into the all-embracing vision. Such is the task to which from all sides voices are calling the Church. *There is a demand for a thought of God, which shall draw and master and satisfy all that is within us.* The Church of God has it in its power to give that vision to its own people, and through them to the world. When the overmastering Reality of that God in Christ

breaks upon men, songs will be heard again such as rang out from the first love of the Church. To the New Heaven there will rise the adoration of mankind, which no longer holds back any of its devotion. It will be morning; and the soul of the Church will renew its youth, and the songs of its first love will startle the world again.

SERVIENDUM ET LÆTANDUM

THE SECRET OF NATIONAL SERVICE

AFTER an Easter Communion in 1777 Dr. Johnson, as his custom was, recorded certain vows. "I had made no resolution," he writes, "but as my heart grew lighter, my hopes revived, and my courage increased"; in such a moment he wrote down this resolve to serve and to be glad. It is a vow worthy to be remembered for its own sake; but it is all the more significant, coming as it does from a heart perpetually exposed to gloom, and yet never mastered—from that tender, hidden heart of which it might be said "without were fightings, within were fears." It was this gallant and troubled spirit that vowed to serve with gladness.

It is easier to recognise than to explain the difference between the two kinds of service, the one without joy, the other prompted and

carried through with a song. The joy of the worker gives to a work what the lilt is to the song and colour to the picture. It lives in the stones of a building or in the lines of a drawing. When William Blake was drawing his morning stars rejoicing in the created world we know that he too was glad : and the builders of Lincoln must have shouted for joy ; and though the difference is not so easy to detect in the service that is given to a nation or to a Church, it is none the less there. It is the joy in the service that gives to it permanence and carrying power ; once put into the work, it is breathed out for the inspiration of others. If it can be known by those who see the Cathedral or handle the pottery of some former age that its workmen sang with their chisel in their hands, or over their kilns, it *can be told to-day whether a piece of national service has been wrought in faith and in joy, or in gloom.* The atmosphere of an office or a workshop makes a difference in the work quite as certainly as the atmosphere of a Church tempers the Word that is preached there. And from the standpoint of a nation

it is necessary not only to seek that things should be done, *but that they should be done with the exhilaration and cheerfulness that can only live where there is a good conscience and a fearless belief in the justice of the national aims.*

It may be doubted whether there is as much of this gladness in service to-day as there was formerly. Of the nation in 1917 it has been said by a writer in *The Round Table* that "the duties of the war were not so cheerfully assumed as they once were; its hardships not so easily softened and illumined by the sense of devotion to the common cause. . . . Patriotic effort had become mechanical." It is true that there has been a recovery in 1918, but there is room still for much more of the joy in service which found so many outgoings, at some of which we smile to-day, in the autumn of 1914. The nation needs an antiseptic against a merely mechanical service; it will find it in the recovery of gladness. But how does this arise?

The appeals that are made to the national spirit often fail because of a lack of faith in the common man. It is forgotten that he

has within him a hidden life which only needs to be won and he will gladly spend and be spent. But he must be won; and will not serve with the joy which saves toil from mechanical dulness unless he is entirely confident of his cause, as a cause, not only clear in the sight of men, but clear in the light of the eternal world, as he sees it. The only appeal which can move the heart of a nation is the appeal of justice to faith; and *faith, when it is assured, brings peace of mind, and peace brings joy.*

To the mediæval Christian, as Aubrey de Vere showed, life was a very serious thing, and yet a light-hearted thing. The Divine was ever "glancing forth from things" which seemed trifles. Yet life was light-hearted "because as regards spiritual matters his heart was at rest." . . . A true poet tells us of "the men of old" that—

"They went about their gravest deeds
Like noble boys at play."

The secret of that joy and the secret for which we seek are not far removed. As regards the spiritual problems of the war, let the mind be

at rest, and then the service of the nation will cease to be a mere mechanical response, it will be wrought in peace and gladness; but first there must be *the spiritual assurance*.

It is significant that the period of acute weariness and partial disillusion was the hour when, for one reason or another, justly or unjustly, the suspicion was widespread that the aims of the Allies had lost their purity. The recovery that is already manifest came with a certain clearing of the atmosphere through the revelation of the true character of the forces to be met. As soon as the plain man knew once more that he was not fighting for a shadow, but for the deliverance of the world from the power laid bare at Brest-Litovsk, he attacked his work afresh with a song on his tongue; he had not ceased from work, but once more he recovered his gladness in service, and that makes all the difference.

It is to be supposed that many of the appeals made to the public mind are concessions to human frailty. It would be wiser to abandon all such *finesse*; if the aims of the nation are spiritually sound they should be set forth in

their own power; let it be clearly understood that if there has been any lagging in the response to appeals, it is not because they have been pitched too high, but because they have been altogether too low. They have not brought to the man whose service is demanded the conviction and the assurance which make men go singing to toil and to death. If the appeal to which we have become hardened is the best that those responsible can honestly make, it would be folly to urge that they should now turn on, as men turn on a tap, a stream of spiritual appeals; nothing is so readily detected and abhorred.

But if they believe in the spiritual aim of this nation, let them say so; and if they do not, let them give way to those who do.

NUNC JUDICIUM EST MUNDI

HISTORY AND THE DAY OF JUDGMENT

HUMAN history, if there is no judgment, is the tale of a movement, which leads nowhere—it is a story without a plot—a sowing without a harvest. History is the record of a race, for which in the last resort moral issues are the only concern; and there can be no reality in those moral issues if there is no disclosure of evil, and no destructive power meeting it in a life-and-death conflict, and if there is no counter-kingdom, slowly but inevitably established—that is, as Dr. P. T. Forsyth has taught with sustained power, *there can be no moral reality without judgment.* For judgment is at once the unveiling of the evil principle, and the vindication within the field of history of the One Divine End. Without judgment the story might lose something of its tragedy, but it would lose all its promise. Neither the abysses nor the heights

would be there; and they who have awakened to the reality of human life know not only that there is a judgment to come, but that there is a judgment proceeding. *History is the minute-book of that unfinished Day.*

“Now is the Judgment of this World”; the day of which the words speak was the Day of the Cross. There, according to this deep and solemn interpretation, two movements in the Act of Judgment were consummated. At once there was destruction and the new creation. The evil principle which had ruined human life was revealed and nailed to the Cross, and the new life in the new kingdom was introduced in its fulness; old things were passed away, all things became new. Upon the Person of their Lord, so the believers saw, Evil Incarnate directed itself; evil was concentrated into one act; and there it was disclosed. And He Who met that power of darkness overcame, and opened up a new counter-kingdom to those who united themselves to Him. In Him they too had judged the evil; in Him they had won their victory.

Yet when the Cross was taken down there was no less evil operative in the world. Pilate went back to his time-serving; Caiaphas to his sacrifices; the life of the world was organised still as it had been. *But an Act of decisive moment had taken place.* For that Act, according to the Faith of the Church, all previous history had been a preparation; and all that followed became the scene into which the powers of that judgment were slowly or swiftly to be released. After the cry went up, "It is finished," what remained but to make operative on a wider and wider scale that revelation of Sin and Love which had been made on the Cross? History became to faith the vast and dim and terrible field upon which the Spirit convicted the world of judgment. The movements might be checked and obscured; judgment might be brought almost to a standstill; and faith could never be sure of seeing it upon any narrow piece of the field; but since it rested upon the One Disclosure and the One Perfect Victory, faith could be patient. However hidden, judgment was proceeding, and in

the end within the processes of human life, "*Babylon is fallen*," and the kingdoms of this world are the kingdoms of God.

After he had made his great discovery of the way in which malaria is transmitted, Sir Ronald Ross wrote in his station in India—

“ I know this little thing
A million lives will save ;
O death, where is thy sting,
Thy victory, O grave ! ”

There were millions suffering then from malaria, but not one was any the better ; yet a principle had been disclosed, and new powers of healing released, which would rescue millions from pain and death. But first the principle, once for all made clear, must be introduced ; the victory over disease, accomplished in that remote station, must be worked out upon the scale of humanity. It is in the same way, though all such analogies are most imperfect, that the Deed of Judgment, wrought in Zion, must be brought into the entire range of human life.

The secret is there. The principle of *self-interest or egoism*, acted there through such

agents as Pilate and Caiaphas and Judas. Over against that principle was established in victory the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus. The scale was small, the scene remote; but all the movements the clash of which make human history were there; and out of that Divine Crisis comes the secret of the whole. History to the Christian faith becomes the scene upon which through the Spirit the Crisis of Calvary is expounded and made mighty both to destroy and to create.

From this side the process of judgment revealed in history looks self-acting—

“ He made a pit and digged it,
And is fallen into the ditch which he made.”

This is always true of those who plan evil and build upon false foundations; if they are given a long enough time their mischief recoils upon them. It is pointed out in *The Nemesis of Nations* how many empires fell because they built upon slavery; and what is slavery but one expression of the evil principle of *egoism*? It is a logical sequence to the demand of one personality upon another, “Thou shalt live only to serve my

interests"; it is a denial of justice, which teaches that every personality must be to others not a means to an end, but *an end itself*. That denial of justice was manifest in Pilate, who sacrificed Jesus, and in Caiaphas, who declared that "it was expedient that one man should die for the nation." On the immense scale of history the same evil principle works in many forms, but its real character is disclosed once for all now. Even in the hour when it still appears mighty, faith sees through this defeated thing. Even now faith knows that the evil principle which boasts mighty things is already judged; it is busy digging pits into which its subjects will fall.

This year 1918 is a moment in the Judgment. The course that the future will take is obscure; but there is one certainty—the spirit of the nation, which makes other nations at all costs serve its own ambitions, is *the spirit already condemned to death*; and the happenings of the future will be but the inexorable and inevitable carrying out of a sentence.

But one more truth must be remembered. To what is the tragic delay of history due? Why is it that the negative and destructive work of judgment is more manifest than the establishment of the positive counter-kingdom? *It is clearer that Babylon is fallen than that the City of God is come.* This must be due to the fact that nations are more ready to be the scourges of God than to be His fellow-builders. They may be used in the prolonged Day of Judgment to destroy; but they hesitate to reconstruct in the Divine way. Often they carry on the evil which they have destroyed in others. Often they leave the house "empty, swept and garnished," and seven other devils return to it. This is the tragic warning of history to all peoples, bidden to use their power to disclose and to destroy a manifestation of evil.

That is why the positive witness to the kingdom of God as a reality waiting now to be introduced cannot be deferred till a more convenient time. To introduce with the passion of faith that new way of life, which corresponds to the Divine Revelation—to

make ready its coinage—to understand what its values mean in practical life—these are tasks laid upon all nations playing a part in this Day of Judgment. It will not be such a Day if it only means the transfer of the seat of evil from Prussia to some other scene; it will be a Day of Judgment when they who have understood and recoiled in wrath from the evil before them are drawn in faith and love to the One Lord of Mankind and to His Other Kingdom.

PIONEERS OF A NEW ORDER

THE RACE PROBLEM AND FOREIGN MISSIONS

WITH a courage which ranks them with the greatest warriors of the Spirit, the early missionaries set out to fulfil the command of their Lord; they were adventurers with sealed orders; they went forth not knowing whither they went; they left unanswered many problems which might arise: it was enough for them to enter any door opened to them, with their good news of redemption and their offer of a new relationship between man and his unseen Lord.

It raises a smile to think that such men as Carey should receive either contempt or patronage from their generation; like Morrison and Martyn and others, their peers, Carey was a scholar of distinction; gifts which would have won some of these men immortality in the world of letters were surrendered

at the call of their Master, at Whose bidding they attempted impossible things, and did them. Therefore it happened to them, as it has always happened to such men, that they left for others a range of influence unknown to themselves, and they solved in principle problems *which were not urgent then, but are urgent now*. In the simple message which they carried they were making experiments with powers of which the world was yet to know its need.

The Church of to-day, as it faces the missionary problem, enters into the heritage of these pioneers; but it finds *the problem unfolded and revealed upon a new scale*. The front is broadened. The Church is in the presence now not only of critics who despise the work, but also of inquirers and friends who look to it for leadership in the spiritual crisis through which the world is passing. The early missionaries, almost unheeded, went out, quietly assuming that they had the secret of the human way revealed to them; they did not know how it would work out, and how many allies would co-operate

with them ; they could not tell by what mysterious ways mankind would be led to demand a spiritual re-birth. They could not foresee that which is plain to the Church of to-day ; but they made ready the way ; they gave the answer before the question. The task of the present hour will not be different from that of a century ago ; it will be still the task of preaching the new life, with its new powers and its new values, and with all the relationships which it opens up with God and man ; but the range is vaster, and the demand must be not only for adventurers, going forth single-handed, but *for societies, moving like disciplined armies*. The front is wider now ; the time is short ; these moments of upheaval in the life of mankind swiftly pass ; there is an opportunity now for the establishment of new and happier relations between the peoples of the world. Whatever society has the secret must set it forth without delay ; and if the Church can offer to-day its old secret with a clear vision of all that is involved, *it will be speaking directly to the spiritual condition of the world*.

The personal and experimental came first, as it must always come first; but there is an explosive power in the preaching of a new relation between man and God. "The men who have turned the world upside down are come here also." When Wesley preached "Gospel holiness" he did not foresee all the implications of his Gospel for English political and social life; but strange powers were released by him. The logical deductions of the faith which set an unknown Chinese in new relations with the Lord of all nations were not foreseen in all likelihood by Robert Morrison; but Morrison and his convert, "one in Christ," were a significant and dynamic fact. A thousand possibilities arose from the establishment of such a bond.

The Church has no cause for boasting as it remembers its past in this matter; it has been hesitating and faithless; but, driven almost against its will, it has been led to see the final unity of the world, and to know that this unity will not stand in institutions, but in the acceptance of *common spiritual values, based upon a common vision of God.*

The Church has learned through the noble experiments of its sons how the world may be at once manifold and one. By a divine instinct it has come to understand the way whereby unity may be achieved without the sacrifice of the riches of the nations. China in this way might still be China, India still be India, but the increase of one would bring no sorrow to the world, because the spiritual values would be the same everywhere. It remains now for the Church to think out and to apply that method without fear and without delay.

Clearly the former relations between races do not satisfy the needs of the new world; it is sheer disaster for one race to treat another as a "hewer of wood and drawer of water"; nor is the analogy of parent and child sufficient: *a new manner of fellowship must be sought*. It must be found soon, for already the races are like neighbours living next door; they cannot ignore each other, especially if they are engaged in the same trade. Already the social problems of the world are seen to be one; the labour problem in the Pacific will

be of vital concern to the workman in Glasgow, and the character of life his children will live may depend upon the spiritual trend of a nation whose shores he will never see. A league of nations is needed, but this is in itself an expression of something spiritual within the nations, and for its staying power it depends upon a certain interpretation of life and its values; it is a new kind of fellowship arising out of a new heart within the nations.

Has any society the secret of that new heart? There is a challenge in this question to the inheritors of the missionary tradition. By their calling they declare that they have the underlying secret. Their business now is to act boldly along the line of their own specific mission. It would be a tragedy if the Church turned all its attention to the outward expressions when its mission is first to the inner life—if it were to operate on the surface and leave the region of its own distinctive work. But the Church has no right to shirk responsibility for the logical outcome of its mission. If a native Church is taught in the

New Testament so wisely that it will not permit the social abuses of the West to enter its land, it should know that the Church at home is behind it in such a protest. If a league of nations is a logical outcome of the establishment of true relations between souls in many lands and the One Lord, then it is for the Church to bless that league.

But there is a danger that the Church may forget, in the pressure of so many claims, that its rod is broken and its virtue departed, if it ever ceases to declare to the individual soul in every land that without tarrying for any it may enter itself into the new life and be in covenant with the Eternal Lord. To be true to this Gospel, and to set it forth at the same time with all its inferences and all its promises—these are the tasks; and who is sufficient for these things?

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